

# ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

## DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

### NEWS RELEASE



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### **SUBDISTRICTS 5 & 6 SUBSISTENCE SALMON FISHING SCHEDULE**

Effective 12:00 noon, Sunday June 24, subsistence salmon fishing will close by emergency order in Norton Sound Subdistricts 5 and 6, the Shaktoolik and Unalakleet Subdistricts, and in the Unalakleet River drainage. On Monday, June 25, subsistence salmon fishing with set gillnets in the Shaktoolik and Unalakleet Subdistricts and Unalakleet River drainage will reopen to marine and freshwater fishing schedules. In the marine waters, the subsistence fishing schedule will be two 48-hour periods per week from 6:00 p.m. Mondays to 6:00 p.m. Wednesdays and from 6:00 p.m. Thursdays to 6:00 p.m. Saturdays. In the Unalakleet River drainage, subsistence salmon fishing will be permitted for two 36-hour periods per week from 8:00 a.m. Mondays to 8:00 p.m. Tuesdays and 8:00 a.m. Fridays to 8:00 p.m. Saturdays. These schedules will remain in effect until further notice.

Subdistricts 5 and 6 Chinook salmon was designated a stock of yield concern by the Alaska Board of Fisheries in 2004. The subsistence fishing schedule was a measure adopted by the Board of Fisheries aimed at increasing escapements of Chinook salmon into the Shaktoolik and Unalakleet River drainages to rebuild these stocks to historical levels of abundance. Additional restrictions and early closures to sport and subsistence fisheries are possible this season based on the trend of poor Chinook salmon runs elsewhere in western Alaska. High proportions of age-4 Chinook salmon were observed at Unalakleet River salmon stock assessment projects in 2011 indicating good survival for the 2007 brood year and perhaps an improved run outlook for 2012. However, Chinook salmon runs in 2012 are thus far tracking well below forecasted levels of abundance throughout Alaska. Consequently, severe restrictions and closures have been taken in other areas in order to meet Chinook salmon escapement needs. Similar restrictive measures may be necessary in southern Norton Sound to reach escapement goals for Chinook salmon.